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ABSTRACT

This guide describes programs created by the Ysleta, Texas, Independent School District to promote sex equity in its high school programs. The programs described have been successful in leading both boys and girls to choose vocational education programs for jobs nontraditional for their sex. The guide describes the following five types of activities: (1) student activities (field trips to Ysleta Vocational High School to learn about nontraditional jobs, futures week, open houses, and full day visits to businesses in the area); (2) activities for parents (surveys of needs, parent workshops, community outreach, brochures, and letters about student options); (3) community programs (linkage conferences for nontraditional workers and educators); (4) programs for educators (conferences and workshops on topics such as occupational outlooks and career opportunities); and (5) media relations (video or slide presentations, public service announcements, posters, and brochures). Suggested resources and a bibliography are included in the guide. (KC)

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KEEPING THE DRIVE ALIVE!

A GUIDE TO PROMOTING SEX EQUITY IN YOUR SCHOOL DISTRICT.

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

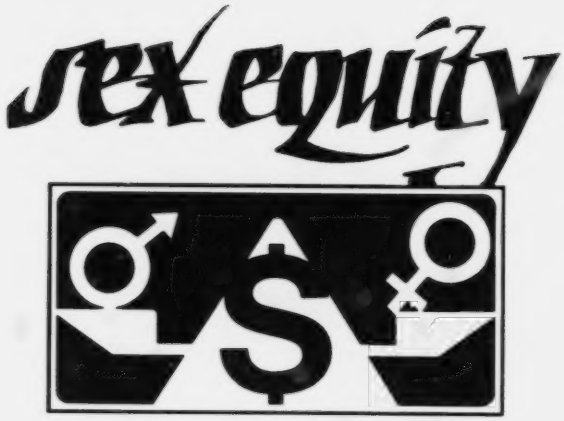
The success of our Sex Equity Program depends on the support of many people. To all those who have assisted in our efforts, we give our thanks and appreciation. I am especially indebted to Bonnie Lesley, *Director of Secondary Education;* Jeannie McChesney, *Vocational Counselor;* Christine Smart, *TEA Equal Access Coordinator;* Olivia Miller-Snapp and Toni Moynihan-McCoy, *1984-85 TEA Project Directors;* and Carmen T. Delgado and Marilyn Money, *Evaluators.*

Much of our success in publicizing our sex equity program can be credited to Bobby Reynolds, the Director of Public Relations for the Ysleta Independent School District. He has worked closely with us to bring this program to the attention of the community.

I would also like to thank Denise Quintana of *Envision Productions* for her contribution to numerous projects including the production of our slide presentation, "Chances and Choices: You've Got Them."

Finally, I would like to thank Catherine Dunn of *Catherine Dunn and Associates* for her assistance in editing this handbook.

Armenia Smith



KEEPING THE DRIVE ALIVE!

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"Unconscious, taken-for-granted, assumed, unquestioned, unexamined, unchallenged acceptance." That's sociologist Jessie Bernhard's description of sexism, an attitude that works against women *and* men. As educators, our role is to show students that their world is limitless, that none of us should be restricted by stereotypes or traditions.

These days, that job has become even more of a challenge. School districts throughout Texas are being asked to do more with less. Therefore, every dollar we spend to promote sex equity has to produce results.

In the Ysleta Independent School District, we have created a number of low-cost vocational equity programs that have succeeded. A higher percentage of our students, both male and female, choose nontraditional jobs that offer good pay and advancement. We have created an excellent working relationship with our business community. An added plus is the positive coverage we have received from the media on these projects.

Each of the programs we have outlined in this final report has proven effective and led to our students' continued progress in obtaining nontraditional jobs. We hope that this material will be helpful in planning projects for your district. You are invited to contact us with your comments or questions.

In speaking of the need to continue the push for job equality, Louise Kapp Howe wrote, "The really necessary work is never fashionable. Just vital. Just basic. Big things leading to bigger things." Our work has just begun.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page No.
Student Activities	1
Resource Material	5
Activities for Parents	6
Community Programs	7
Programs for Educators	8
Media Relations	9
Bibliography	11

STUDENT ACTIVITIES

TRY IT, YOU'LL LIKE IT!

EIGHTH GRADERS LEARN ABOUT NONTRADITIONAL JOBS DURING A FIELD TRIP TO YSLETA VOCATIONAL HIGH SCHOOL

In a pilot program offered during the 1983-84 school year, eighth-grade classes were taken on a tour of the Vocational High School. The trip gave students an advance look at some of the options available in vocational education, and helped them make decisions about course selection and enrollment. Before they arrived at the high school, each student was given a map of the school, a description of each program and a brochure outlining the advantages of nontraditional jobs.

To make the students feel more comfortable about asking questions, a vocational student was assigned to lead each group. Having a peer serve as a role model encouraged discussion about goals, career plans and expectations about vocational classes.

As students went to each class, the teacher explained the program, specific job skills the students learn, and the entry-level positions available for trained workers.

After the tour, students submitted evaluation forms that gave the program high marks. They were enthusiastic about meeting older students already involved in planning their careers, and many of them indicated that until the tour they were unaware of the many opportunities for job training available at the high school level. They were also impressed with the wide range of nontraditional jobs, some of which they had not considered before the field trip.

Because of the success of the program, we offered it to students at the junior high and secondary school levels during the 1984-85 school year. The field trips will continue to be offered each year.

FUTURES WEEK: STUDENTS PLAN FOR TOMORROW

> *"This activity has made me aware of the right way to apply for a job, so that I can make an outstanding presentation."*

The student who wrote that evaluation learned more than interview skills. Futures Week gave students career information about nontraditional jobs, information which was integrated into the regular curriculum. Writing, reading, science and math classes all sponsored Futures Week activities. Science classes, for example, offered a two-day presentation on family planning and decision making. In reading classes students were asked to read and discuss "A Guide to Today's Hottest Careers - You and The Job Market". English teachers assigned written compositions about vocational education and the need to plan for the future. In social studies, students played the "Career Game". They learned about how to compute their odds on a successful future during a math class. In each activity, the student were encouraged to focus on life after high school and the best way to prepare for that future.

Classroom teachers also participated in a job interviewing skit in which two college students were asked to role play a job interview. Students learned how to dress, what questions to expect from the interviewer and what information the student should bring to the interview.

Field trips to government, business and industry centers in El Paso were also scheduled. Students had a chance to observe nontraditional workers on the job and to speak with their employers.

Because parents play such a major role in influencing their child's career decisions, vocational teachers sponsored a Parents Night to show them the advantages of nontraditional careers. Teachers offered tips on how to motivate students to plan for the future, and a slide presentation was shown which discussed the choices available through our vocational high school. Parents were informed about graduation requirements, grading systems and how they could take a more active role in their child's education.

Career Day was the final activity of Futures Week. Several hundred students heard businesspeople give dynamic, informative presentations on everything from being a female business executive to starting a print shop.

Because the program was so well-received, Futures Week is now offered in all secondary schools in the District. Not only do students increase their awareness of vocational opportunities, but mainstream teachers and counselors also learn more about our programs.

AN OPEN HOUSE AT YSLETA VOCATIONAL HIGH SCHOOL

Last year, we held an Open House to give those students interested in taking vocational classes a closer look at our program and facilities. Participants were asked to pre-register for a three-hour session that included a tour of the High School, demonstrations by nontraditional workers and panel discussions by vocational high school students and local businesspeople.

Registration blanks were available through each vocational counselor, and we made sure that every school had flyers and other PR materials.

From the business community, women and men from nontraditional areas shared their experiences, both as workers and as employers. They served on a panel that discussed the role vocational education plays in readying students for work, and offered some practical advice about preparing for the future.

We encouraged a continuing dialogue between all of the participants and invited parents to attend the Open House with their children.

Because the program was so successful, these activities were repeated during the 1984-85 school year. Students indicated that they felt more positive about vocational education after touring the high school and talking with students already enrolled in vocational classes. They also felt that they had a more realistic view of the future after talking with employers.

The Open House has become a permanent part of our promotional effort for sex equity.

A DAY IN THE LIFE: SPENDING A DAY ON THE JOB WITH OUR JOB VISITATION PLAN

Our goal was to retain students who were already enrolled in a vocational program by giving them more direct contact with the workplace. With this in mind, we started a pilot job visitation program during the '83-'84 school year.

Twelve businesses let us place students at the worksite for one full day. We asked them to assign someone from their company (a nontraditional worker) whom the students would "shadow" as he/she went about the daily routine. Our students were thoroughly briefed on what to expect and how to act once they were sent to the company. To make sure that things were going well, we spot-checked the participating firms. What we discovered after the follow-up session was that each company was impressed with the quality of our students and agreed to help in job placement of vocational graduates.

Our students felt that job visitation was a valuable tool in career planning and goal setting. They developed an awareness of other work opportunities and felt motivated to continue their vocational training.

The pilot involved twenty students, but the second year of our job visitation drew thirty-six students who were distributed among twenty-nine volunteer companies.

We plan to continue to offer the program to our students.

RESOURCE MATERIAL

CAPS AND COPS

This has nothing to do with hats or police officers. Both CAPS* and COPS* are acronyms for tests to evaluate a student's interest and aptitude for nontraditional jobs. The results of these paper and pencil tests are forwarded to both the student's parents and his/her guidance counselor. The tests are administered to ninth-graders prior to choosing their courses or prior to registration. The test questions are designed to help students uncover hidden talents. After evaluating their responses, we are able to show them how they can channel that talent into a challenging and rewarding career. The tests are an effective recruiting tool for vocational education.

**CAPS - Career Ability Placement Survey*
**COPSystem Interest Inventory*

"CHOICES AND CHALLENGES"

"I want to be all that I am capable of becoming". That quote from writer Katherine Mansfield appears on the first page of *"Choices: A Teen Woman's Journal for Self-Awareness and Personal Planning"*. This book has been a valuable resource in helping our female students set realistic, positive goals for the future. The tone is warm and supportive, with excerpts from popular songs, quotes from famous women and exercises and questionnaires for the students to complete. Some of those exercises include goal setting, personality evaluation and assertiveness training. The student is asked to confront her beliefs about relationships and the role of women in today's society.

The companion book for boys is *"Challenges: A Young Man's Guide for Self-Awareness"*. It has a similar format to its sister publication, but focuses on the male's role at work, at home and in relationships. Ridding students of the myths of the "macho mystique" and the dependent woman is one of the points of *"Challenges"*.

Both books ask students to reevaluate his/her expectations about work and career planning. Sample lists of jobs and salaries are included, as well as scenarios of typical situations that the student could encounter in the future.

ACTIVITIES FOR PARENTS

INVOLVING PARENTS IN VOCATIONAL EDUCATION

Students look to their parents as role models, as a source of guidance and approval for their actions. Some recent studies indicate, however, that though parents want to give their children good career advice, they feel inadequate assuming the role of career counselor. After all, the world changes so rapidly that sometimes it is hard to know what the future holds. It is important that we develop resource materials to use in helping parents deal with these concerns.

In the Ysleta Independent School District, we created a number of programs targeted for parents. To survey their needs, we sent out a questionnaire to parents of middle school students asking which areas they would like us to emphasize in parent workshops.

We have developed a community outreach program which enables vocational educators to speak with groups like the PTA, churches and civic organizations. Our presentations deal with opportunities available through vocational education.

We also distribute a brochure entitled "Helping Your Child Choose A Career: Tips for Parents". This publication is designed to boost parents' confidence in talking with their children about future plans.

Parents also receive a letter and brochure advising them of student options in choosing their courses. This letter goes out to parents of both eighth-graders and high school sophomores.

COMMUNITY PROGRAMS

GETTING TOGETHER: LINKAGE CONFERENCES FOR NONTRADITIONAL WORKERS AND EDUCATORS

Our linkage conferences are invaluable in helping us to develop the kinds of programs that boost the recruitment and retention of students in vocational education. They are our way of keeping in touch with the business community, especially with those people involved in nontraditional jobs. From these conferences, a network of volunteers has been created upon whom we can call for advice or assistance.

The names of those workers invited to attend the conference are drawn from our Role Model Index. This is a list of knowledgable workers who are willing to share with students current information about job training and opportunities in their field.

Each linkage conference runs about three hours. During that time, we have a pre-dinner get-together where we ask both our guests and the vocational staff to complete a questionnaire that focuses on how we can best meet the needs of vocational students. During dinner, we encourage participants to discuss their answers and to prepare a brief summary of strategies that they feel might prove effective. Members of the business community are asked to participate in vocational education by serving on advisory committees and volunteering to be guest speakers at special functions.

The results of our linkage conferences are always gratifying. By working with business people, we are able to develop realistic strategies for promoting student interest in vocational training.

The conferences keep us aware of current conditions in the local job market, and help us to guide students into constructive careers with a potential for growth.

PROGRAMS FOR EDUCATORS

EDUCATING THE EDUCATORS

Successful vocational training depends on the cooperation and understanding of a team of educators: teachers, counselors and members of the administrative staff. They are the ones who must disseminate information to students and parents, publicize vocational programs and encourage an attitude of support. To ensure that each educator has an opportunity to share his/her experiences, Ysleta's Sex Equity Program sponsors workshops and conferences for such groups.

The conferences are our chance to identify successes, as well as problem areas, in the District's vocational education program. They help us to inform educators about occupational choices and job placement.

In a three-hour seminar, the audience is asked to participate in a number of activities: strategy-planning sessions for nontraditional career placement; experience sharing; a quiz to test their knowledge of women in the work force and the teaching of techniques that improve recruiting and retention of students. We also presented a videotape of nontraditional career opportunities. Our goal was to encourage District educators to develop their own innovative programs in each school, whether it was inservice training on sex equity; guest lecture programs for students and faculty; field trips to local businesses or classes to educate students about the job market and their future role as workers.

By keeping educators current on facts and figures about vocational education, we make it easier for them to communicate to students the advantages of vocational training.

MEDIA RELATIONS

NEWSFLASH!: WORKING WITH THE MEDIA TO SPREAD THE WORD ABOUT VOCATIONAL EDUCATION

Whether you call it public relations or community awareness, it's essential that you let people know about your programs for vocational education. In some districts, you may be working closely with your public information director. Or you may find yourself responsible for doing some of the public relations groundwork yourself. No matter the system, some of the ideas outlined here might prove helpful to you.

What are the benefits of working with the media? High public awareness, an increase in those willing to volunteer for future projects, and community support of your activities. The more we can spread the word about vocational education, the more students we can reach.

If your budget permits, explore the possibility of producing **video or slide presentations** of successful programs. We've found them to be an important tool in training teachers and educators. Our presentation was called "Chances and Choices: You've Got Them", a fifteen-minute production that showed non-traditional students on the job. Each student explained why he or she had decided to enter a particular field, and each discussed the benefits of attending a vocational high school.

Public service announcements have also been used to great effect. During the one-week period preceding our Open House at the high school, local T.V. stations aired PSAs inviting the public to attend.

Here are some examples. . .

VIDEO	AUDIO
YISD Seal	
YISD Instructor in classroom	Learning to work. That's what Ysleta Vocational High School is all about.
Female student welder	Students learn valuable job skills in any one of 32 programs.
	I'm a welder. With what I learned, I can pay my way through college!
Male student working with medical equipment	I took health occupations – now I'm sure I want to be a registered nurse.
Vocational Ed. classes	Last year 93% of our graduates found jobs in their field.
Vocational Ed. instructor	Vocation education works! It worked for me.
	Visit Ysleta Vocational High School during our Open House on February 13, from 7-9 p.m.

VIDEO	AUDIO
Assortment of classroom shots – workers on job.	Where do high school students learn about the world of work? At Ysleta Vocational High School learning to work is what it's all about. Students can choose from 32 programs, from electronics to drafting to health occupations. Last year 93% of Ysleta Vocational High School graduates found jobs in their field.
	Visit Ysleta Vocational High School during our Open House on February 13, from 7-9 p.m.

Posters of nontraditional workers were another way of getting our message across. We distributed them to classrooms all over the state.

Students and parents in the District received **a brochure** entitled "Vocational Education Isn't For Everyone, But. . ." Inside, the copy explains how students can benefit from vocational training, what kinds of programs are offered, and how students can learn more about their special areas of interest. To encourage them to contact their guidance or vocational counselor, we enclose a tear-panel that students can fill out and leave with the counselor to receive more information.

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